

and holding out a helping hand to the peasants, he finally rallied to the party of the princes, his indispensable protectors. Again, his mission as a preacher of the gospel of justification by faith could not but get mixed up with the intellectual movement of the time. Luther as well as Reuchlin was the ally of the humanists in the attack on tradition. Obscurantism was the enemy of the gospeller as well as of the humanist. The preacher of the gospel and the humanist were brethren in the same cause, and therefore Luther was involved more or less in the movement of intellectual emancipation of which Erasmus, Hutten, and others were the prophets. Hence the strange spectacle, in this age of bitter antagonisms, of compromise or attempts at compromise, between men of radically different character and aspiration, between Luther and Hutten for instance, and for a time even between Luther and Erasmus. Nay, we even find that eclectic doctor, Christopher Scheurl, busy arranging a temporary friendship between Luther and Eck. Conservative reformers like Wimpfeling and Zarius were at first among his sympathisers. Humanist enthusiasts like the brilliant Mutianus were among his warmest admirers. In every university he found earnest supporters among the younger generation of scholars. It was Heidelberg, for instance, that gave him Philip Melancthoa. For a time the preacher of the gospel from the monk's cell at Erfurt bade fair to become an apostle of humanism in spite of himself, the antagonist of the schoolmen in the pulpit as well as in the professor's chair. Luther and his humanist friends seemed to be working in the same cause.

Or take his appeal to the Bible. There, it might seem that Luther stood on strictly religious ground. From the Bible he adduced his doctrine of the justification of the individual soul by faith; from the Bible his doctrine of the priesthood of believers, the spiritual equality of all Christians—a doctrine which in respect of its levelling effects is comparable to Wicklif's doctrine of lordship. The Bible is the grand authority to which all men shall bow. There could surely be no dispute here. And yet men did dispute most fiercely over the teaching of the Bible, and draw conclusions widely different from those of Luther. There was not merely controversy between the champions of the new gospel and the